Comparative Study of Indo-Pacific Policies of Quad Nations From India's Perspective

Synopsis

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1.Introduction

Indo-Pacific is made of the two words Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean. The Indo-Pacific is a political region that comprises Asian, African, and island countries in the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean. The origin of the term dates back to the 1920s and 1930s. In 1930, army general and diplomat Karl Houshoefer, in his book 'Geopolitics of the Pacific Ocean, conceived the idea of the Indo-Pacific. The idea was to form an anti-colonial alliance of Asian countries against Germany's rivals, such as Britain and the United States, in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Although this vision of the Indo-Pacific was never fructified, Karl Houshoefer put forth the idea of the Indo-Pacific in the 1930s to safeguard the national interests of Germany against the British Empire. In the period of the Cold War, the Indian and Pacific Oceans remained contested between the erstwhile Soviet Union and the USA. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the Cold War ended, and the United States emerged as the sole superpower. At the end of the Cold War and the first decade of the 21st century, the Indo-Pacific region was completely dominated by the United States.

The first decade of the 21st century was a decade of rapid economic growth, and against the backdrop of rapid economic growth, the People's Republic of China began to rise on the world stage. On the back of three decades of rapid economic growth and technological prowess, China undertook a program to modernize its military. In this military modernization, special emphasis was given to the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). According to a US Defense Department report released in 2021, China has the biggest navy in the world today, with 355 vessels. By 2025, the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) is expected to gradually increase its size to 420 ships and, in 2030, to 460 ships. Till now, the Indo-Pacific has been dominated by the United States Navy. In the near future, China will be able to challenge the United States' influence in the region and beyond.

The geo-strategic and geo-economic significance of the Indo-Pacific region is enormous. The Indo-Pacific region accounts for 65% of the global population, 62% of the global GDP, 46% of global trade, and half of global maritime trade passes through the Indo-Pacific region. The Indo-Pacific region consists of great world powers like the USA, China, and Russia and middle powers such as India, Japan, and Australia. To understand the geopolitics of the world, one must understand the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific region. It is imperative to study the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific. In the 20th century, the theater of world politics was the Atlantic Ocean; similarly, in the 21st century, the theater of world politics is the Indo-Pacific.

China, the new rising superpower, challenges the dominance and influence of the USA in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond. Many Western officials and academics have referred to the BRI as 'debt trap diplomacy', where China funds infrastructure investments, leaving countries with unsustainable debt, and using this financial and political leverage to manipulate these same governments. One example is Sri Lanka's Hambantota Port, where the Sri Lankan government could not pay back its Chinese loan, with the port consequently leased to China on a 99-year term. This exercise of coercive diplomacy by China has negative security implications for India, the United States, Japan, and Australia.

China's rapid economic growth, coupled with its technological prowess and military modernization, has disturbed the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region. The United States, India, Japan, Australia, and other small Asian nations are anxious about China's actions and coercive diplomacy. These countries began to see China as a threat to their security and as poised to restore the balance of power in the region. The United States, India, Japan, and Australia came together and formed a quadrilateral security dialogue, popularly known as the Quad.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Genesis of Quad

In the wake of the 2004 tsunami, Japan, Australia, the United States, and India came together and formed the Tsunami Core Group" to respond and provide disaster relief. This was the first time that these four countries came together, and this formation provided a basis for future cooperation. In a speech in 2006, popularly known as Confluence of Two Seas, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe put forth the idea of Quad (quadrilateral security dialogue), an informal grouping to discuss common interests among these four countries. In a next step of progress, in 2007, the navy's of the United States, Japan, Australia, and India joined for the Malabar Naval Exercise. The naval military exercise was seen as a possible future military alliance of the Quad and therefore was criticized and faced domestic opposition in India, Australia, and Japan. In the meantime, China launched a campaign against the Quad by filing protests with each of these countries. These factors led to limiting the scope of the quad to just trade and culture as an implication of this quad going into a dormant state.

2.2 Quad 2.0

The period between 2008 and 2017 was dormant, or a period of inaction. At this time, the Quad countries gave pause to the initiative. Meanwhile, the governments of India, the United States, Japan, and Australia spent time developing their relationships and took various initiatives on bilateral, trilateral, and minilateral level 2 + 2 dialogues of foreign and defense ministers between India and the United States, India and Australia, and India and Japan to promote and deepen the relationship. During this time, China's relationship with the USA, India, Japan, and Australia soured. In the 2017 Doklam standoff, India saw military coercion by China, and India's membership in the nuclear support group was blocked by China. Military skirmishes in Galwan Valley and large-scale military standoffs at various border points All of this led to the serious downfall of India. China-US relations and trust deficits have significantly increased.

Japan also witnessed coercive behavior by China in the case of Senkaku Island's nationalization in 2012 and frequent transgressions by Chinese Coast Guard and Maritime Militia vessels into Japanese maritime waters. The United States and Australia witnessed trade disputes with China, which led to the trade war between the USA and China. The United States sanctioned various Chinese companies, especially key technology companies, on grounds of national security.

Representatives from the four nations (at the assistant secretary level) met in Manila on November 12, 2017. On the margins of the Manila ASEAN Summit, the officials discussed a wide variety of issues, including support for the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” concept and the promotion of a rules-based system in the Indo-Pacific region. In 2018, the Navy Chiefs of four countries met. In 2019, the foreign ministers of four countries met, and in 2021, member states of the Quad and their leaders decided to host a regular leader summit.

2.3 Research Problem

As an arena of global geopolitics and a center of world politics, there are various studies that have been and are still going on in the Indo-Pacific region and Quad countries. These studies have studied the genesis, mission, effectiveness, and feasibility of the quadrilateral military alliance, but there is one aspect that has not been studied, which is that there is no comparative study of the Indo-Pacific policies of quadrilateral countries. A comparative study is necessary to understand the level of coordination and friction among these quadrilateral countries.

The Indo-Pacific has emerged as the forefront of world geopolitics and great power competition. The superpower United States, rising superpower China, and other regional powers such as India, Japan, Australia, South Korea, etc. all reside in the same region. The rise of China and its coercive behavior have compelled other nations, especially India, Japan, Australia, and the United States, to come together and restrict China's influence. These four

countries formed the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, popularly known as a Quad, an informal non-military group to coordinate their response to the important issues in the region. For example, quadrant countries must ensure global supply chain resilience and reduce dependency on China in order to protect the world economy from disruption caused by China's irresponsible behavior. There are growing concerns among government officials and academics in the Quad countries about China's territorial claims on Taiwan and China's willingness to use force to unite Taiwan with mainland China. If China resorts to the military option to unify Taiwan with mainland China, in this scenario, the global supply chain will brake down and the technology of semi-conductor manufacturing will fall into China's hands. To avoid all these implications of China's coercive actions, the Quad countries must insulate the global economy and supply chain from China. To do this, the United States launched the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework to combat China's influence.

For any initiative of the Quad Group to work properly and achieve its objectives, the policies of Quad member countries should be in sync. The complete synchronization of policies among quadruple nations is very difficult to achieve, but it is a prerequisite for the success of quadruple grouping. But unfortunately, there is a knowledge gap about how each of the Quad member countries sees their national interest in the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific region and has formulated their Indo-Pacific policy accordingly. To assess the coordination among the Quad countries, one must analyze the Indo-Pacific policies of the respective countries comparatively. Therefore, this research project undertook the task of a comparative study of the Indo-Pacific among the Quad member countries.

3.0 Objectives of the Research Project

1. To study the areas of convergence and divergence in Indo-Pacific policies of the quad countries.

2. To study the opportunities and challenges before India in the job politics of the Indo-Pacific.

3. To study the balance of power equation in the Indo-Pacific region from the perspective of the Quad Nations.

4.0 Research Questions

11. To find out the convergences in the Indo-Pacific policies of the Quad Nations.

2. To find out areas of divergence in the Indo-Pacific policies of the four nations

3. To inquire into the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific to find the opportunities presented to India.

4. To examine the challenges to India in the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific.

5. To examine the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific: Quad vis-à-vis China

5.0 Research Hypothesis

1. There are areas of convergences in Indo-Pacific policies of Quad countries.

2. Existence of areas of divergences in Indo-Pacific policies of Quad nations.

3. Geopolitics of Indo-Pacific present opportunities to India.

4. Geopolitics of Indo-Pacific present challenges before India.

5. Equation of balance of power in Indo-Pacific has changed.

6.0 Research Method

In this research project scholar will adopt descriptive method and analytical method of research. Scholar will use various combination of research Methods to study and analyse primary sources of data such as policy documents, records, speeches, manuscripts and join declarations of Summit. Scholar will study various academic books, research articles and panel discussions as secondary source of data .

7.0 Data Collection

For any kind of research, researchers need data. The data can be primary, which is directly and personally collected by the research scholar himself in order to perform research experiments. The data can be obtained from secondary sources such as the research work of other scholars, books, articles, journals, newspapers, etc. For this research project, scholars will use primary sources of data such as policy documents, records, speeches, manuscripts, and declarations of the Summit. Scholars will study secondary sources of data, such as various academic books, research articles, and panel discussions.

8.0 Scope of Research

Indo-Pacific region for last couple of year has been on forefront of the world geopolitics. In near future significance of the region will be more prominent than ever before . Indo-Pacific consist of world's top three economies (PPP) and one superpower United States and a rising superpower China , India a leading power and Japan , Australia, Sauth Korea and ASEAN countries. But for the purpose of our research we will limit our research to four countries known as Quad namely United States, India, Japan and Australia . We will study Indo-Pacific Policy of each of these nations from comparative perspective. Main focus area of comparison shall be Economic , strategic and security aspects of the policies.

Geopolitics of Indo-Pacific brings enormous opportunities and challenges for India. We will examine economic, political, strategic, defense and security opportunities and challenges before India in the geopolitics of Indo-Pacific. In the end we will examine the equation of balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region. Whether China's rise altered the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region and how Quad countries are making efforts to restore that balance of power.

9.0 Significance of The Research

1. To understand the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific region and its implications for India and major players in the region.
2. This research project will greatly enrich our understanding of not only the nuanced geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific region but also the interest dynamics among Quad member countries.
3. This research project is important from the perspective of India's national interest in the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific.
4. To understand the opportunities and challenges facing India in the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific region, this research provides important insights.
5. Shifts in the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region and power dynamics between major players are prerequisites to understanding the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific. This research will help students of international relations understand these issues.

10.0 imitations

1. This research project focuses only on the on countries of quad group (United States India Japan Australia) and not the whole Indo-Pacific region.

2. This research project studies the Indo-Pacific policies from comparative perspective. Scholar will study the an areas of divergences and convergences in Indo-Pacific policies but scholar will not study whether these policies are effective or not.

11.0 Chapters

Chapter 01 : Introduction

In the 21st century, the Indo-Pacific region has become an arena of global geopolitics and great power competition. The rise of China has altered the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region. America and other regional powers like India, Australia, and Japan came together and took the initiative to form a quadrilateral security dialogue. popularly known as a Quad, a non-military, informal dialogue forum for coordination among Quad countries. Each of the four member countries has an Indo-Pacific policy to safeguard their respective national interests in the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific region. This research project is a comparative study that intends to find areas of convergence and areas of divergence in the Indo-Pacific policies of the Quad countries. Scholars also intend to find the opportunities and challenges facing India in the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific region. In the end, we will examine the equation of the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region and how the Quad countries are making efforts to restore that balance of power in the Indo-Pacific.

Chapter 02 : Comparative Perspective ; Convergences in Indo-Pacific policies of Quad nations

This chapter deals with the study of the Indo-Pacific policies of the United States, India, Japan, and Australia. We will analyze the Indo-Pacific policies from a comparative perspective in order to find areas of convergence in the Indo-Pacific policies of the four nations.

Chapter 03 : Comparative Perspective ;Divergences in Indo-Pacific policies of Quad Nation

In this chapter, we will analyze the Indo-Pacific policies of India, the United States, Australia, and Japan in order to find out the areas of divergence in their policies. Upon analyzing the policies, we will be able to identify various focal areas of interest to these nations.

Chapter 04 :Opportunities for India in Indo-Pacific

The rise of China coincided with the rise of the Indo-Pacific and Asian centuries. China's coercive behavior towards neighboring countries such as South Korea, Japan, Asian countries, and India has made these countries see China as a security threat. There is a necessity on the part of these countries to come together and restrict the rise of China in order to safeguard their national security interests. In this act of balance of power, there is greater demand for India to do so. In this case, India will have an opportunity to grow economically and expand its sphere of influence in the region.

Chapter 05 : Challenges before India in Indo-Pacific

In this chapter scholar will study and examine the challenges before India geopolitics of Indo-Pacific. on the one hand Indo-Pacific provide greater opportunities for India on the other hand various challenges before India there might be economic ,technological and national security challenges India will have to face in geopolitics of Indo-Pacific.

Chapter 06 : Changing balance of power equation in Indo-Pacific and Quad

The economic rise of China, technological progress, military modernization, and China's coercive behavior towards other nations shifted the balance of power in the region. Today, China has the largest navy in the world, which shows its intent to operate and exert influence in the Indo-Pacific and beyond. China's policies have implications for the region and the world. To restore the balance of power, the United States has taken the lead, and India Japan and Australia are playing an important role in balancing China. The formation of a quadrilateral security dialogue is a step in that direction. In this chapter, scholars will study and analyze the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific and the efforts taken by Quad nations to restore the balance of power.

Chapter 07 : Conclusions

In this research project, scholars will undertake a comparative study of the Indo-Pacific policies of the United States, India, Japan, and Australia. The scholar will examine and analyze these policies in order to find areas of convergence and divergence. The scholar will study the opportunities and challenges before India, and lastly, the scholar will examine the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region and the efforts of the Quad countries to restore that balance of power. Finally, scholars will draw conclusions from this research project in this chapter.

Chapter 08 : Recommendation

At the end scholar intend to suggests necessary policy prescription in order to avoid fraction among Quad countries and promote smooth and efficient coordination. scholar will suggests some internal policy changes to India so it can get most out of the opportunities in Indo-Pacific.

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